Numb. 93.

The Female Tatler.

Written by a Society of Ladies.

Ridentem dicere verum quid vetat ?

From Friday February 10, to Monday February 13, 1710.

Sophronia's Day.

IS allow'd by all Authors both Ancient and Modern, from the Unweildy Folio to the Weekly half Sheet, that the greatest Service Fortune can do her most distinguish'd Favourites, is to give them a first Employment, and place them in a proper Light. I have taken some Pains to enquire into the truth of this Assertion, and am sincerely convinc'd, that she has no other Blessings in Store for those she Loves, than what I have mention'd, nor no deeper Contrivance to Ruin those she Hates than the Reverse. How much then does it Concern the Race of Mortals, seriously to examine their Abilities, and the several Tasks appointed, that by the Aid of Human Prudence they may Learn to improve her Smiles and Laugh at her Disdain; give me leave to Expostulate a little, Why should a happy Rural, born to Hereditary Ease and Ignorance, one whom the Partial Goddess out of pure Indulgence has screen'd from Publick Notice, force himself into unnecessary Views, and neglecting his *March* and *October* Amusements, that might Reward his Care, perplex himself with Politicks, and expose himself at *Whites?* Why should he lose himself in timerous and puzzl'd Guesses at the Success of the next Campaign, that might to Clear and Elaborate on his tow'ring Hauks and fleeing Hounds at his own Mansion. From this Object of Compassion officious Thought has hurried me to one more to be lamented, One that might have been Celebrated for the soundest Sleeps and the loudest Laughs of any Indolent alive; One, that had nothing else to do on this *Mole-Hill* among his Fellow Insects, but to order his Chocolate in a Morning, commend his Soup at Dinner, Repose himself in an Easy Chair till Five, and then adjourn to the *Play* to be Merry; if it was *Comedy* in the *Pit*, if *Tragedy* behind the *Scenes*; then Home to divert himself till Eleven with his Grace's Children, and then to *Morpheus*, till *Aurora* wak'd him to pursue the same blest Road, the beaten Path of Innocent Delight; and this State of Being best became him, for he look'd a pleasant inoffensive Old Gentleman, but hateful to Record: There is now two Months elaps'd since he has wander'd Retrograde from that proper Sphere Fortune had kindly fix'd him in, and round which he mov'd with such peculiar Grace; and has Married a Young Wife, Distracted himself with Dress, and must never hope to Laugh or Sleep more.

Here a suitable Good was thrown away for want of knowing its Value, and most unmanagibly ill procur'd, out of Ignorance of his own Capacities: Wealth is a Gift of Fortune's Right Hand, when confer'd upon one that can tell how to use it, but often scatter'd in Scorn by her Left, that Fools may pick it up and be undone by it. Two Thousand a Year may be acknowledged a tollerable Subsistance, and would render many a Man happy as he could wish to be, by qualifying him to be Just, Generous and Grateful, to enjoy himself and his Friends, and help him to plod on the destin'd Journey to Threescore and Ten, without loud Complaint; but I have known it bestow'd on a restless Invention and impertinent Industry, and evaporated in Fumes or exhausted in Projects, by which means he has become exquisitely Wretched, and uncapable of any Redress, that had he been inur'd to get his Livelihood, in all probality he might have made himself as famous as *Molt* and *Povey*. Places of high Trust, Honours and Titles, are Ornaments and Advantages to busy Men, but to Minds retir'd and Contemplative, they are as so many Snares, Interruptions and Misfortunes. The great Lord *Bacon* will be remembred as a sad Instance of this late Posterity; had his Royal Master understood him throughly, he had not confin'd that Sublime Genius to the Fatigues of Power, but left him to follow his better Choice, and his indefatigable Studies: What should we not have received from his Learning and Eloquence, his Universal Knowledge of Men and Books, of Nature and of Arts, from his unerring Judgment and flowing Wit; had he been all his own, then all Parts of his Life had been equally Bright, Envy and Calumny that prey on Grandeur, had lost their Triumph; those Foes that sought the Judge had miss'd of the Philosopher, and himself had been as secure from Injury as his Fame, which no unhallow'd Voice will ever dare to Arraign.

But to remove my Thoughts from the loftiest Cedar to the lowest Shrub: Passing along the Streets last Week by some New Buildings, I observ'd a Tyler quit his Work, and descend the Ladder in great haste, to buy the News that was cry'd by. Now here, thought I, is Learning fallen into indifferent Hands, and may one time or other endanger this Poor Man's Neck, Were not Industry and Stupidity a better Composition for a Tyler, than Knowledge and Curiosity? 'Tis true indeed, by the help of Letters he may find to excuse his Neglects or Mistakes, but 'tis certain our Houses would be more secur'd from Raining in, by the Man that knew nothing of the Matter. Nor was Eloquence ever more unhappily misapplied, than by Mr *Cringe* the *Silkman* in *Ludgate-street*; that Elaborate Stile and high sounding Rhetorick of such prevailing Force at the Bar, does from behind a Counter but breed a Suspicion that his Goods are damag'd, and sends most of his Customers to *Nathaniel Brief*, the Quaker, they

preſering Formality to Impertinence. Now it wou'd never grieve me, if theſe Friendly Monitions of mine wou'd prove effectual, tho Mr *Cringe* ſhou'd never thank me I cou'd content my ſelf, if I obſerv'd him in the leaſt reprov'd; but I dare affirm were I to call there next Week for half a Yard of Aſh Colour'd *Perſian*, he wou'd run into a Thouſand Encomiums on its Gloſs and Beauty, and expreſs himſelf in the ſame Phraſe as on the Roſe Colour'd *Sattin*. This is the ſevereſt Tryal of Human Patience, and I am often very near making a ſtrict Reſolution to give my ſelf no more uneaſineſs on this Score; but to let People go on in their Abſurdities, what is it to me, whether they ſupply Matter for Panygerick or Ridicule, either will ſerve my turn and fill my Paper: Had Mr *Cringe* been bred to a *Band*, *Campaign Wig*, and a *Green Bag*, and had leave to exercile that Volubility of Tongue in *Weſtminſter Hall*, a Building deſigned and adapted to receive Sound unfetter'd with Senſe, even there where he wou'd have made an Agreeable and Ingenious Perſon, and appear'd in the only proper Light that could have been found for him, he had reap'd the Benefit, not I, 'tis much the ſame to me as to my own particular, to remember him in his Shop Meaſuring his Silks, and Haranguing with humble Grimaces for his own Good, I urge my Remonſtrance, and I hope he will ſo conſider it, that he will ſtrive to ſpeak without Hyperbola, and in a Year 'tis poſſible he may break himſelf of it.

This Mortal I adviſe to confine himſelf to his Sphere' and make the beſt of the paſt Life he is fix'd in, yet 'tis wonderful we ſhou'd not know when we are well, when every thing ſuits our Underſtandings and Deſires, but ſuffer our ſelves to be entic'd by the ſpecious Baits of Government and Gain, to quit Peace and Security, and like *Æſop's* Animal, exchange the Subſtance for the Shadow.

This is Squire *Oldfox*'s own Caſe, he was placed with infinite Regard to his Intellects and Advantages, and a bright Man he was in his way, till miſled by the hopes of Arbitrary Sway, he finds himſelf at the Head of a Stubborn Contentious Family, and himſelf a greater Slave than any he endeavours to Command. The little Tyrant not ſatisfy'd with Conqueſt, proclaims her Triumph, and makes his own Charriot Wheels expoſe him to the Publick, while ſhe inſulting boaſts her Victory. To confeſs my Mind, I am not ſorry for the *Squire*; 'tis requir'd in this new Scheme of Life he has enter'd upon, that he ſhould be a Judge of Love and Gallantry, and that can't be learnt from Books nor Criticks; 'twas abſolutely neceſſary to make the Experiment with his own Heart, and 'tis my Requeſt, that he may be the Wiſer for it long, or ſay this is not the firſt Wound by many that he has been inſtructed by in the great Buſineſs of the *Drama*, the moving of our Paſſions artfully; yet being advanc'd in Years, it may be ſuppos'd, and I very readily believe, they have been heal'd, and all the anguiſh forgot ſometime ſince: Therefore he could not avoid having one of them open'd, or a new one made, if he had but a Thought of giving his Opinion on the Performances of his Houſhold.

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